

REMARKS/ARGUMENT IN RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION/ELECTION OF SPECIES

Claims 1-11 and 22-30 are under examination while claims 12-21 are withdrawn. Of claims 1-11 and 22-30, claims 22-30 have been deemed allowable in the previous action and claims 2-11 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

In the present response, Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite that a stream comprising uncalcined coke is comprised of particles of coke having a particle size distribution in which at least 50% of the particles will pass through a 200 mesh screen. Support for this limitation may be found for example in original claim 7. Claim 7 is accordingly canceled. Applicants have made this amendment solely to expedite prosecution of the application. Applicants believe all pending claims are in condition for allowance – claims 1-11 by virtue of the incorporation of claim 7 into claim 1 and claims 22-30 as indicated in the outstanding action.

No new claims are added. Thus, this amendment includes no new matter.

Response to the Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) based on U.S. pat. No. 2,734,853

Claim 1 stands rejected based on U.S. Pat. No. 2,734,853 to Smith et al (hereafter referred to as “the Smith patent”). Applicants have reviewed the rejection and the Smith patent and respectfully disagree that the Smith patent renders the present claims unpatentable.

The Applicants respectfully note that the Smith patent is directed to a fluid coking system. Particulate coke produced by the fluid coking process of the Smith patent is burned in the calciner. Calciner off-gas is removed and introduced with a fuel gas to the burner. The particle size of the coke in the fluidized bed (before coke is formed on the coke particles by the fluid coking process) of the Smith patent is in the range of 70 to 600 microns. *See* col. 2, lines 50-53. While the Smith patent indicates the size of the initial coke particles, the Smith patent is entirely silent regarding the size or size distribution of the coke particles after coke is formed on the coke particles by the fluid coking process which are then passed to the burner.

In contrast, claim 1 currently recites that the particles in the stream passed to the combustion chamber have a size distribution such that 50% of the particles pass through a 200 mesh screen (200 mesh screen is approximately equivalent to a particle size of 74-80 microns. *See, e.g.*, <http://www.pointsourceirrigation.com/products/filters/filters.htm>). Because the size of the coke particles in the fluidized bed of the Smith patent are at least 70 microns and as much as 600 microns even before coke is formed on them, most if not all the coke particles produced in the process of the Smith patent will be larger than the cut-off of the 200 mesh screen recited in claim 1. Given that the particles may be as large as 600 microns before coke forms on them, the uncalcined coke stream of the Smith patent is not comprised of particles of coke having a particle size distribution in which at least 50% of the particles will pass through a 200 mesh screen. Moreover, because the Smith patent teaches that the coke particles are passed directly from the coker to the burner without passing through any sort of mill or grinder, there is no reason to believe that the particles could meet the limitation of claim 1. Therefore, Smith does not anticipate the process recited in claim 1. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection and pass the claim 1-11 to allowance.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have addressed all of the Examiner's rejections. Applicants believe that the claims are now in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the Examiner grant such an action. If any questions or issues remain, the resolution of which the Examiner feels will be advanced by a conference with the Applicants' attorney, the Examiner is invited to contact the attorney at the number noted below. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 16-1575.

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Respectfully submitted,

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